

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus capable of providing an alphanumeric speed dialing service, said apparatus comprising:

5 a database including a table of stored alphanumeric speed dialing codes and stored phone numbers; and

10 a controller, coupled to said database, capable of receiving an alphanumeric speed dialing code from a calling party and further capable of comparing the received alphanumeric speed dialing code to the stored alphanumeric speed dialing codes and if there is a match then enabling a connection between the calling party and a called party at the stored phone number associated with the received alphanumeric speed dialing code.

15 2. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein each stored alphanumeric speed dialing code is related to a name of a potential called party.

20 3. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said received alphanumeric speed dialing code includes at least one letter which is related to a name of the called party.

25 4. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said received alphanumeric speed dialing code includes at least one numerical character that is translated by said controller into an alphanumeric speed dialing code which is related to a name of the called party.

5 5. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said controller
is also capable of receiving a feature access code which
activates the alphanumeric speed dialing service along with
the alphanumeric speed dialing code.

10 6. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said controller
is also capable of changing one of the stored phone numbers
of a potential called party when the potential called party
is issued a new phone number.

15 7. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said
alphanumeric speed dialing service is an enhancement to a
numerical speed dialing service.

8. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said apparatus
is incorporated within a telephone.

20 9. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said apparatus
is incorporated within a switch.

10. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said apparatus
is incorporated within a home location register.

25 11. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said apparatus
is incorporated within a service control point.

12. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said calling party uses an alphanumerical phone to generate the alphanumeric speed dialing code.

5 13. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said calling party uses a numerical phone to generate the alphanumeric speed dialing code.

10 14. A method for enabling a calling party to use an alphanumeric speed dialing service, said method comprising the steps of:

 providing the alphanumeric speed dialing service with a plurality of alphanumeric speed dialing codes and a plurality of phone numbers which are associated with potential called parties; and
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 providing the alphanumeric speed dialing service with an alphanumeric speed dialing code instead of a phone number of one of the potential called parties that the calling party would like said alphanumeric speed dialing service to enable a connection therewith.
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15. The method of Claim 14, wherein said step of providing the alphanumeric speed dialing service with a plurality of alphanumeric speed dialing codes and a plurality of phone numbers further includes the steps of:

5 generating a list of the phone numbers of the potential called parties that are to be associated with alphanumeric speed dialing codes;

 selecting the alphanumeric speed dialing codes that are descriptive of the potential called parties; and

10 forwarding the phone numbers and the alphanumeric speed dialing codes of the potential called parties to the alphanumeric speed dialing service.

15 16. The method of Claim 14, wherein said step of providing the alphanumeric speed dialing service with an alphanumeric speed dialing code further includes the step providing a feature access code along with the alphanumeric speed dialing code to initiate the alphanumeric speed dialing service.

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 17. The method of Claim 14, wherein said provided alphanumeric speed dialing code includes at least one alphanumeric character which is related to a name of the one called party.

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18. The method of Claim 14, wherein said provided
alphanumeric speed dialing code includes at least one
numerical character that is translated into an alphanumeric
speed dialing code which is related to a name of the one
called party.

19. The method of Claim 14, wherein said alphanumeric
speed dialing service can automatically update the phone
numbers of the potential called parties.

20. A method for providing an abbreviated
alphanumeric speed dialing service to a calling party, said
method comprising the steps of:

receiving, from the calling party, a plurality of
alphanumeric speed dialing codes and a plurality of phone
numbers of potential called parties;

storing the plurality of alphanumeric speed dialing
codes and the plurality of phone numbers of the potential
called parties;

receiving an alphanumeric speed dialing code from the
calling party;

comparing the received alphanumeric speed dialing code
to the stored alphanumeric speed dialing codes; and

if there is a match between the received alphanumeric
speed dialing code and one of the stored alphanumeric speed
dialing codes, enabling a connection between the calling
party and a called party at the stored phone number

associated with the received alphanumeric speed dialing code.

21. The method of Claim 20, further comprising the
5 step of changing one of the stored phone numbers of a potential called party when the potential called party is issued a new phone number.

22. The method of Claim 20, wherein said step of
10 receiving an alphanumeric speed dialing code from the calling party further includes receiving a feature access code which activates the alphanumeric speed dialing service.

23. The method of Claim 20, wherein said received
15 alphanumeric speed dialing code includes at least one letter which is related to a name of the called party.

24. The method of Claim 20, wherein said received
20 alphanumeric speed dialing code includes at least one numerical character that is translated into an alphanumeric speed dialing code which is related to a name of the called party.

25. The method of Claim 20, wherein said received and
25 stored alphanumeric speed dialing codes are related to the names of the potential called parties.

26. The method of Claim 20, wherein said alphanumeric speed dialing service is an enhancement to a numerical speed dialing service.

5 27. The method of Claim 20, wherein said alphanumeric speed dialing service is a telephone based service.

28. The method of Claim 20, wherein said alphanumeric speed dialing service is a network based service.

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29. A telecommunications system comprising:
an apparatus capable of providing an alphanumeric speed dialing service, said apparatus including:

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a database including a table of stored alphanumeric speed dialing codes and stored phone numbers; and

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a controller, coupled to said database, capable of receiving an alphanumeric speed dialing code from a calling party and further capable of comparing the received alphanumeric speed dialing code to the stored alphanumeric speed dialing codes and if there is a match then enabling a connection between the calling party and a called party at the stored phone number associated with the received alphanumeric speed dialing code.

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30. The telecommunications system of Claim 29,
wherein said apparatus is also capable of providing an
numerical speed dialing service, wherein said database
includes a table of stored numerical speed dialing codes
5 and stored phone numbers and said controller is capable of
receiving a numerical speed dialing code from a calling
party and further capable of comparing the received
numerical speed dialing code to the stored numerical speed
dialing codes and if there is a match then enabling a
10 connection between the calling party and a called party at
the phone number associated with the received numerical
speed dialing code.

31. The telecommunications system of Claim 29,
15 wherein said received alphanumeric speed dialing code is
related to a name of the called party.

32. The telecommunications system of Claim 29,
wherein said calling party provides one feature access code
20 along with the alphanumeric speed dialing code to initiate
the alphanumeric speed dialing service and said calling
party provides another feature access code along with the
numerical speed dialing code to initiate the numerical
speed dialing service.

25 33. The telecommunications system of Claim 29,
wherein said apparatus is a telephone, switch, home
location register or a service control point.